

Why we're here and what we're advocating for.



EDUCATION

Identify and support legislation that allows Florida's working families access to quality childcare and early learning. Invest in childcare and early learning to improve reading and math literacy. Act to decrease disparities in 3rd grade reading levels which vary across Florida and are significant for Hispanic and black students and those experiencing poverty.

- **SUPPORT** legislation to expand income eligibility for childcare and early learning subsidies to more working families.



VETERANS

Enhance outreach efforts and invest in programs and initiatives designed to engage veterans and connect them with vital supports. This includes funding additional VSO positions, innovating outreach strategies, and providing additional funding to help advertise and promote free services. Outreach initiatives must account for populations that are harder to reach, such as young veterans and female veterans. Female veterans are often unaware that they are eligible for certain benefits and specialized programs.

- **ADVOCATE** for legislation designed to strengthen outreach efforts to Florida's veterans—specifically female veterans and hard-to reach-populations—and help ensure that they are able to access the benefits they are entitled to.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Continue making preemptive investments in behavioral health services, as the Legislature has done previously, to address Florida's growing population and the resulting demand. Increase access to trained behavioral health professionals in dedicated mental health settings. This is essential to effectively address the growing demand. While primary care providers play a critical role in general health, behavioral health care should not be primarily managed in these settings.

- **SUPPORT** legislation that increases transparency and data availability on Florida's behavioral health investments and their outcomes.
- **SUPPORT** legislation that integrates behavioral health into pediatric primary care and educational settings, including through telemedicine.



ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Inflation is hitting **ALICE** harder. Housing costs remain high. One in eight Floridians is facing hunger. One in five children in Florida face hunger.

- **SUPPORT** reforms that promote the development of diverse and robust housing options, specifically focusing on those that help lower-to moderate income households.
- **SUPPORT** efforts to preserve existing affordable housing stock, including initiatives that will allow seniors to age in place.
- **SUPPORT** efforts to ensure **ALICE** families have access to high quality fresh food products.



MEET ALICE

In Florida, **ALICE** keeps our state’s economic engine humming. **ALICE**, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - the key word is “employed” - gives a name to **33 percent** of our state’s population. These hard workers do not earn enough to support their own families and are regularly forced to make tough choices like deciding between quality childcare or paying the rent, which have long-term consequences not only for their families, but for all Florida’s residents.

WE KNOW ALICE

While **ALICE** households exist across all demographic groups, the pandemic exposed and widened gaps in rates of hardship by race/ethnicity, age, and household composition.

In Florida, white households are more likely to live below the **ALICE** Threshold, however the percentage is higher in households for other groups. Florida’s youngest and the oldest households have the highest rates of hardship with 71% of households headed by someone under age 25 and 53% of senior households living below the threshold.



ALICE AT WORK

Full-time salaried work brings greater financial stability, yet a large (and growing) number of workers are paid hourly. Workers who are paid by the hour are more likely to have fluctuations in income due to frequent schedule changes and variable hours, and they are less likely to receive benefits, such as health insurance, paid time off, family leave, or retirement benefits.

In addition, a historically high number of workers are out of the labor force. This has helped keep wages low: When more workers are available, employers have less incentive to raise wages to attract employees. Many workers are out of the labor force due to retirement; other reasons include school, health issues/disability, and family caregiving responsibilities.



ALICE IS IMPACTED BY INFLATION

The annual **ALICE** Household Survival Budget composed on only the basic costs needed to live and work in Florida, rose by 12% for a single adult, by 11% for a senior citizen, and by 7% for a family of four with two small children in the most recent report. With the increasingly high rate of inflation, things continue to get worse for many.

Traditional economic measures underestimate the actual cost of basics. To better capture the reality of household costs in each Florida county, United For **ALICE** provides budgets that are tailored by location and household type.

